

Weekly Police Beat for the week ending December 22, 2017

Sleepless Resident Plays Key Role Interrupting Thieves

Alert call followed by rapid police response results in recovery of car stolen in Virginia

On Friday, December 22, 2017 at around 3:30 a.m., a resident of the 100 block of Oxford Street was having trouble sleeping. The resident heard some noise outside his home, so he peered out the window to see two young black males wearing dark clothing getting out of an SUV and walking toward Western Avenue looking into cars. Immediately recognizing this as suspicious behavior, the resident called the Village Police Department.

Officer Willie Hearn, the only Village police officer on duty at the time, responded immediately and was on the scene within two minutes. Officer Hearn didn't see the pair initially, so he waited in the dark keeping watch on Western Avenue. In a few minutes, he spotted two young males in dark clothing crossing Western from the DC side toward the Village. Officer Hearn stopped the pair and began to question them. Two DC police officers soon joined Officer Hearn.

Officer Hearn questioned the two young men about the SUV that the Village resident had seen two subjects get out of. The pair denied any knowledge of the SUV. The resident was unable to identify the pair as the ones whom he had seen; it was dark and the resident was unable to see sufficient detail to identify them.

During the encounter with the two subjects, Officer Hearn spotted an Acura car key on the ground nearby. As expected, the two young men denied any knowledge of the key. Officer Hearn took the key to the SUV that the resident had seen the suspicious males get out of (it was still parked in the same spot). The SUV was an Acura RDX, and voila, the key belonged to that car. Further investigation revealed that the Acura had been stolen from Arlington, Virginia on December 15.

Officer Hearn immediately called the Montgomery County Auto Theft Unit (ATU), and the stolen car was towed to the ATU for forensic analysis. Although Officer Hearn and the DC officers were unable to prove a connection between the pair and the stolen Acura, Officer Hearn was able to positively identify the young men. If evidence is discovered to connect the suspects to the car, they will be arrested at a later time. The investigation is continuing.

It's unfortunate that our resident had trouble sleeping, but the Village Police Department is grateful that he was awake! The resident's alert observation and quick call gave the police a chance to respond and take action. There is no doubt that the resident's call combined with Officer Hearn's quick action prevented further crime. This is a fine example of an excellent citizen/police partnership!

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Car Stolen from Center Street is Recovered in DC

Valet key apparently found inside the car by the thieves enabled the theft

On Sunday, December 10, 2017 at around 9:30 a.m., a resident of the 5500 block of Center Street discovered that her car had been stolen from her driveway overnight. Village officers entered the stolen car information into the national criminal justice database to aid in the recovery of the car.

On Sunday, December 17, 2017 at about 11:15 p.m., Metropolitan (DC) Police notified the Village Police Department that the stolen car had been recovered in the 1500 block of Alabama Avenue SE, Washington, DC. The Metropolitan Police towed the car to an impound lot for storage. The car was not visibly damaged, but the registration plates had been removed from the car.

Officer James Timmerman of the Village Police Department went to the impound lot in northeast DC to process the car for evidence. A plastic valet key was found inside the car that had likely been left inside the car by the dealer unbeknownst by the owners. With that key, the thieves were able to drive the car away.

Officer Timmerman discovered some evidence within the car that may help to identify the thieves. Timmerman has made contact with a detective from Montgomery County's Auto Theft Unit, and the two are working together to follow up. The investigation is ongoing.

Residents are urged to check inside the owner's manual cover and throughout their cars for the presence of valet or 'wallet' keys and remove them. And most importantly, keep your car locked and these thieves will not get inside your car in the first place.

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